

**REMARKS**

The Office Action dated April 27, 2006 has been received and considered. Reconsideration of the outstanding rejections in the present application is respectfully requested based on the following remarks.

**Allowability of Claims 1-12, 14-16 and 17-19**

The Applicant notes with appreciation the indication at page 4 of the Office Action that claims 1<sup>1</sup>-12 and 17-19 recite allowable subject matter. Applicant further notes with appreciation that the indication at page 4 of the Office Action that claims 14-16 recite allowable subject matter. Applicant has elected to forego amending claims 14-16 as suggested in light of the following remarks.

**Obviousness Rejection of Claims 13, 20 and 30**

At page 2 of the Office Action, claims 13, 20 and 30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kobayashi (U.S. Patent No. 6,992,987) in view of Hein (U.S. Patent No. 5,396,231). This rejection is hereby respectfully traversed.

Claim 13 recites transmitting data to a first peripheral system over a first plurality of PCI Express port connectors and receiving data from the first peripheral system over a second plurality of PCI Express port connectors, wherein the second plurality is less than the first plurality. These elements are not disclosed or suggested by either of the cited references, individually or in combination. As indicated by the Office Action at page 2, Kobayashi does not disclose or suggest receiving data from the first peripheral system over a second plurality of PCI Express port connectors, wherein the second plurality is less than the first plurality. The Office Action states that Hein discloses "wherein the second plurality is less than the first plurality" at col. 9, lines 40-46. The cited portion of Hein is set forth below:

a second stage including a second plurality, less than said first plurality, of mutually identical stride extender coupler modules, each of said stride extender coupler modules including input ports, at least some of which are fixedly coupled

<sup>1</sup> Paragraph 3 (fourth line) of the Office Action indicates that "Claims 1, 20 and 30 are rejected." However, it is Applicant's understanding, based on Paragraph 3 (first line) and Paragraph 5 of the Office Action, as well as the Office Action Summary, that the indication of claim 1 as rejected is a typographical error.

to said output ports of said crossbar switches of said first stage, and also including output ports

*Hein*, col. 9, lines 40-46. As indicated by the cited passage, Hein discloses using a second plurality of mutually identical stride extender coupler modules. Hein does not disclose or suggest a second plurality of *PCI Express port connectors* as recited in claim 13. In addition, the Hein states that the “first plurality” of Hein refers to a first plurality of mutually identical crossbar switches. *Id.*, col. 9, lines 35-36 (“a first stage including a first plurality of mutually identical crossbar switches”). Thus, Hein discloses a first plurality of *mutually identical crossbar switches* and second plurality of *stride extender coupler modules*, with the second plurality smaller than the first. *Id.*, col. 9, lines 40-42 (“a second stage including a second plurality, less than said first plurality, of mutually identical stride extender coupler modules”). In contrast, claim 13 recites two pluralities of *PCI Express port connectors*, with the second plurality smaller than the first. Accordingly, both Hein and Kobayashi, individually and in combination, fail to disclose or suggest each and every element of claim 13.

With respect to claim 20, the claim recites a PCI Express port comprising a first plurality of data receive connectors to receive a first data when in a first mode of operation, and a second plurality of data transmit connectors dedicated to transmit a second data when in the first mode of operation, wherein the first plurality is greater than the second plurality. These elements are not disclosed or suggested by Kobayashi or Hein, either individually or in combination. Neither Kobayashi nor Hein disclose or suggest a PCI Express port having two pluralities of data transmit connectors, with one plurality greater than the other. Accordingly, both Hein and Kobayashi, individually and in combination, fail to disclose or suggest each and every element of claim 20.

Regarding claim 30, the claim recites receiving data to a first peripheral system over a first plurality of PCI Express port connectors and transmitting data from the first peripheral system over a second plurality of PCI Express port connectors, wherein the second plurality is less than the first plurality. As explained above, neither Kobayashi nor Hein disclose or suggest two pluralities of PCI Express port connectors, with one plurality smaller than the other. Accordingly, the cited references necessarily fail to disclose or suggest receiving data to a first peripheral system over a first plurality of PCI Express port connectors and transmitting data from

the first peripheral system over a second plurality of PCI Express port connectors, wherein the second plurality is less than the first plurality. Thus, both Hein and Kobayashi, individually and in combination, fail to disclose or suggest each and every element of claim 30.

In view of the forgoing, it is respectfully submitted that the obviousness rejection of claims 13, 20, and 30 is improper. Withdrawal of this rejection and reconsideration of the claim therefore is respectfully requested.

#### **Obviousness Rejection of Claims 21-29**

At 3 of the Office Action, claims 21-29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kobayashi in view of Hein as applied in claim 20 above, and further in view of common knowledge in the data processing art. This rejection is hereby respectfully traversed. Claims 21-29 depend from claim 20. Accordingly, Kobayashi and Hein, individually and in combination, fail to disclose or suggest each and every element of claims 21-29, at least by virtue of their dependency on claim 20. In addition, claims 21-29 recite additional novel elements.

In view of the forgoing, it is respectfully submitted that the obviousness rejection of claims 13, 20, and 30 is improper. Withdrawal of this rejection and reconsideration of the claim therefore is respectfully requested.

#### **Conclusion**

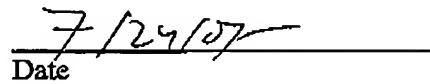
The Applicant respectfully submits that the present application is in condition for allowance, and an early indication of the same is courteously solicited. The Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned by telephone at the below listed telephone number in order to expedite resolution of any issues and to expedite passage of the present application to issue, if any comments, questions, or suggestions arise in connection with the present application.

If the Commissioner believes additional fees are due, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees, which may be required, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account Number 50-0441.

Respectfully submitted,



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